

IMPROVING EFL SPEAKING OF GUIDES AT THE ACEH TSUNAMI MUSEUM

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ABSTRACT

This research was aimed at finding out the English language proficiency of the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum and the difficulties faced by them in communicating with English speaking visitors. The research design used in this study was a qualitative descriptive method and in order to collect data, the writer used a test as an instrument. The test was an interview: asking for their opinion about the philosophy of the Aceh Tsunami Museum and asking for information about the collections in the museum, in which the writer served as the active interviewer in collecting the data. The respondents in this research were 13 local guides from the Aceh Tsunami Museum. The interview test was aimed at gathering more data and information needed from these guides on their English language proficiency and the difficulties faced by them in communicating with tourist visitors. In addition, the writer recorded and took pictures of all the activities done during the interviews. Based on the research results, only one guide from the 13 was in the excellent category for all speaking aspects (excellent in grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation). While the others were in the categories of very good, good, and fair enough. Mostly, the difficulties faced by the guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum in speaking English were about expressing ideas verbally, lack of vocabulary, lack of knowledge about grammar and collocations, and poor pronunciation all of which made them not confident to speak English and this was mostly due to lack of

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motivation, lack of training and even lack of practice speaking with tourist visitors.

Keywords: *English language proficiency, local guides, promoting tourism, Aceh tsunami museum*

INTRODUCTION

English is the fourth most widely spoken native language in the world, and in terms of sheer number of speakers, it is the most spoken official language and the language that has the most speakers combining first and foreign language (EFL) speakers. According to Simion (2012), it is the primary language used in international affairs having official status even in nations where it is not the primary spoken language. English is indisputably the primary language of global trade and commerce and tourism since, in many countries, most tourism authorities and other officials in contact with the public speak English to interact and engage with tourists and immigrants.

Furthermore, English is considered the lingua franca of the twenty-first century, everyone needs to have a good command of English today and the importance of teaching English for professional uses and particularly in the field of tourism is undeniable. English proficiency is required in all professional areas but it becomes essential in the tourism industry because of its specific characteristics. English Language has played an important role in the development of tourism and is also used widely for travel, as well as in client contact. English for tourism is one of the most attractive areas of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) because, after all, all of us are tourists on various occasions nowadays, Simion (2012).

In the sector of services, especially in Aceh, tourism plays an important role. In order to ensure the quality of hospitality services, it is necessary to find a common language between the supply and demand sides. Since English has become an international language, it has become increasingly necessary for employees working in the tourism sector to develop their English language skills to be able to fulfill the requirements of tourists. Furthermore, according to Maggi and Padurean (2009), globalization has increased competition in tourism markets, and destinations are exposed to tough price competition on homogenized products by rivals worldwide. Given these challenges and the desire by locals for sustainable tourism development, human

resource development is critical to the success of tourism in many markets.

Therefore, the local guides should be able to use English professionally in their tourism field, especially they should have speaking skills because communication skills are an important element of the hospitality industry. Bobanovic (2011) states that understanding of performance expectations are key to the achievement of tourist satisfaction. Good oral and written communication skills are the top skills of importance for hospitality practitioners at different position levels. Good English communication skills at work will add value to the guides' performance and quality. Accordingly, a good tourism hospitality program itself should encourage critical thinking to solve tourism problem when they arise. Bobanovic (2011) has also said that in the tourism industry, the supply and the demand side must communicate perfectly in order to ensure quality and needed performance standards. In the business of tourism practice, oral communication skills are much more important than written communication skills, but both categories are highly needed.

Unfortunately, based on the writer's observations during her first visit to the Aceh Tsunami Museum, the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum have serious problems in using the English language, especially in communicating orally. Besides, mastery of vocabulary is the most significant skill in having good communications with tourists. Finch, Hansen and Alexander (2010) have said that the professionalism of the local guides is absolutely important because the better their skills in interaction with the clients the higher will be the satisfaction that is obtained from them. Naturally, the word will spread and such a situation will attract more tourists to visit, study, and to inform others, until all the world knows about the beautiful objects and the highly satisfying guide services at the Aceh Tsunami Museum.

Finally, Ashley et al. (2007) have added that by giving satisfaction through good service and professional guiding skills, tourists will stay longer. This is a good opportunity and an advantage for raising the social economic values of society in the future. Many advantages will be obtained by providing tourists with the best possible services to help them achieve their goals of a satisfying experience.

English communication skills are important to be mastered by the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum so that they can fulfill their duties appropriately and well as local guides. So they must be fluent with good speaking skills, good pronunciation, and good vocabulary.

However the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum have found that improving their English language proficiency in speaking aspects is very difficult for them. The problems found during the writer's observations are explained below.

The first problem is their opportunities to speak English. The guides do not have enough opportunities to practice speaking. Opportunities to practice English are needed for them to be able to improve their English language proficiency in speaking. English is regarded as a foreign language in Indonesia because most people in Indonesia speak *Bahasa Indonesia*. As a result, they did not have much opportunity to speak English in daily conversation. The only opportunity they have at present is when foreign tourists come to their museum.

The second problem is the guides' lack of vocabulary. The mastery of vocabulary is very important for the local guides. However, most of them do not have enough vocabulary so they find it difficult to speak in English. The lack of vocabulary was one of the major problems for them as foreign language learners. They need to enrich their vocabulary as much as possible including the use of idiomatic words so that they can make a good impression on foreign tourists.

The third problem was pronunciation or should we say mispronunciation. The guides found it difficult to correctly pronounce many common English words because they were not familiar with the words and the way to pronounce them because of their lack of opportunities to practice speaking EFL. Mispronunciation can lead to misunderstandings amongst speakers and listeners. Consequently, it is important for them to be able to learn the usual correct pronunciation of the words they use in their vocabulary and to pronounce them correctly.

In short, many problems were faced by the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum in speaking professionally with their tourist visitors. Those problems have become obstacles for them to be able to speak fluently, accurately, and properly in English. Based on the reality above, the researcher decided to conduct a qualitative research study to find out the level of their English language proficiency especially in speaking skills as it is the main skill needed in the tourism sector and the main difficulty they face in having good communication with the tourist visitors are due to their poor speaking skills.

Research Questions

1. How good is the English language proficiency of the Aceh Tsunami Museum (ATM) guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum?
2. What difficulties do the ATM guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum face in communicating with tourists especially when communicating in English?

Research Objectives

1. To find out the English language proficiency of the ATM guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum
2. To find out the difficulties faced by the ATM guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum in communicating with tourist visitors especially when communicating in English.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

English Language Proficiency

According to Stern (1983), proficiency can be looked at as a goal and thus be defined in terms of objectives or standards. These can then serve as criteria by which to assess proficiency as an empirical fact, that is, the actual performance of a given individual learner or of groups of learners. He has said that “proficiency ranges from zero to native-like proficiency. The zero is not absolute because the second language learner as speaker of at least one other language, his first language, knows language and how it functions, however complete competence is hardly ever reached by second language learners” (p. 341). Bachman (1990) defines language proficiency as language ability or ability in language use. Oller (1983) states that language proficiency is not a single unitary ability, but that it consists of several distinct but related constructs in addition to a general construct of language proficiency. Farhady (1983) has stated that the term 'proficiency' refers to the examinee's ability in a particular area of competency in order to determine the extent to which they can function in a real language use situation.

Speaking Proficiency

In learning a language, such as English, there are four skills that must be learned and practiced, they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Learning English without practicing speaking is useless, because practice in speaking English can improve our knowledge,

without practice we will find it easier to forget many things in our learning. This means that speaking is the second most commonly used skill in daily life after listening. Kayi (2006) says that the ability to communicate in a second language clearly and efficiently contributes to the success of the learner in school and to success later in every phase of life.

One of the basic problems in speaking a foreign language is preparing someone to be able to use the language. For instance, it is obvious that in order to be able to speak a foreign language, it is necessary to master using a certain amount of vocabulary and collocation. For instance, to test whether someone can speak English or not, it is necessary to get them to actually say something. This is also supported by Bygate (1997, p. 3) who has written that *“to do this, they must act on knowledge of grammar and vocabulary. By giving speaking practice and oral exams, we recognize that there is a difference between knowledge about a language and skill in using it”*.

In spoken interactions, speakers and listeners do not merely have to be good processors of the spoken word and able to produce coherent language in the difficult circumstances of spoken communication. It is also useful if they are good communicators, that is, they are good at saying what they want to say in a way that the listener can find understandable. To appreciate what is involved: it can be useful to think of the communication of meaning as depending on two kinds of skills as discussed below:

Firstly, in many circumstances speakers organize what they have to communicate in a typical pattern. These patterns correspond more or less to typical kinds of messages, and so deal with recurring cognitive problems and have been called routines. Routines are *“conventional ways of presenting information”* (Bygate, 1997, p. 3). Because they are conventional, they are predictable and help to ensure clarity. Example of routines includes greetings, story-telling, describing or comparing, and instructions.

Secondly, speakers also develop skills in solving all sorts of communication problems, which can be expected to occur in spoken exchanges. These, we will call negotiation skills. They consist of skills that are used to enable speakers to make themselves clearly understood whatever the interaction, and to deal with communication problems that may occur. Negotiation skills are skills that are common to all kinds of communications. For example, they include the ability to check a specific meaning, to alter wording, to correct a wrong interpretation, to

find words for ideas for which the speaker does not already have some generally accepted phrase or even to find words that we can't remember.

Speaking is not an easy thing to do. When we speak, we not only make a sound, but we must also use other skills such as pronunciation, structure, and vocabulary. Lado (1994, p. 11) has written *"if you are now studying or have studied some foreign languages, you realize that learning to speak a language is not a simple task."* In the same way, Brown (1983, p. 25) wrote *"learning to talk in a foreign language is often considered to be one of the most difficult aspects of language to learn. In order to speak, it not only needs skills but also needs ability and experience."*

In this research, the writer focussed on the English proficiency of the local tourist guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum. To find out their English language proficiency for promoting tourism at the Aceh Tsunami Museum, the writer paid attention to their aspects of speaking. According to Brown (2004, pp. 172-173), the five skills or aspects of speaking are pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehensibility.

Pronunciation; pronunciation is the way in which a particular word or sound is pronounced (Manser, 1995, p. 331) it is very important for successful spoken communications. Without good pronunciation, the listener will find it difficult to understand and get the point of what the speaker is saying.

Grammar; according to Nunan (2003, p. 154), grammar is generally thought to be a set of rules specifying the correct ordering of words at the sentence level. The Longman Dictionary of Applied Linguistic quoted by Nunan (2003, p. 154) defines grammar as a description of the structure of a language and the way in which units such as words and phrases are combined to produce sentences in the language. Also, grammar is the ordering of words which are arranged into sentences to give meaning.

Vocabulary; vocabulary is one of the aspects of language which is very important in learning any language especially in learning speaking. Therefore to be able to communicate as clearly as possible in a target language, the students have to master a lot of vocabulary. Vocabulary is about the words, where they come from, how they change, how they relate to each other and how to use them to view the world (Bauer, 1989) quoted by Muliawati (2007, p. 86). In brief, vocabulary is the total number of words that a person knows or should

know that will make up the language for them, The total vocabulary in the English language is over 250.000 words and no-one could know all of them. There are many specific vocabularies eg medical vocabulary, economics vocabulary. The ATM guides need to know a tourism vocabulary that is specific for Aceh and for natural disasters, specifically for a Tsunami also they should know how Tsunamis occur and where and when major ones have been recorded ie they should be trained to become mini specialists in Tsunamis and in Aceh.

Fluency; One of the main factors in the ability to speak EFL in order to make the ideas or the spoken message understood by the listener, is that the speaker must speak fluently. Hieke (1985) quoted by Rafida (2003, p. 13) states that fluency is an ability to use long sentences with few pauses, coherently, about the topic, and to be creative and imaginative in their use of language. In summary, fluency is the ability to speak a language smoothly and easily.

Comprehensibility; what the speaker says must be comprehensible – this depends on both spoken language and body language, it also depends on the rate of speech, the volume of speech and the projection of speech.

Comprehension is the understanding between the speaker and the listener that communicate in the same language as their base for communication. O'Malley et al. (1989) have said that listening comprehension is viewed theoretically as an active process in which a person focusses on aural and visual input, constructs meaning from what has been said and relate what they hear to existing knowledge. Thus, to comprehend is how to fully understand what is said.

The ability to speak a foreign language is the most pressing of the skills because someone who is able to speak a language well will also be able to understand it. Lado (1961, pp. 239-240) has defined good speaking ability as: *“the ability to use in essentially normal communication, stress, intonation, grammatical structure, and the vocabulary of the foreign language at a normal rate of delivery for communication with (native) speakers of the language.”*

In conclusion, English language speaking competence is the competence that someone has in saying English words with the ordinary voice; or the competence in communicating vocally or to have conversations through practice and training and talent or aptitude. In this case asking a local guide at the Aceh Tsunami Museum to speak is the way to know what their EFL speaking competence is for promoting tourism with overseas visitors at the ATM. In addition to that, Lado

(1961, p. 240) has pointed out that speaking ability is described as the ability to report acts and/or situations in precise words, or the ability to converse, and/or to express a sequence of ideas fluently. The writer concludes that, to find out the English language competence of someone they must speak with them using that language. Someone who wants to speak a foreign language well has to know a lot about the language, the rules of the language, like grammar, collocations, specific vocabularies, pronunciation and word-formation, and how to apply them all properly in real-time communication in order to be comprehensible.

Tourists and Tourism

Tourism is the pleasure and business activity which involve people travelling to destinations outside their normal place of residence for short or long periods of time (Chilembwe, 2010). Similarly, The United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO, 2009) interprets tourism as the activities of persons travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than a year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of any activity remunerated from within the place visited.

Travelling is one of the core aspects of tourism that has emerged as a very popular leisure activity in the 21st century due to increases in the number of paid holidays of staff. As a result, many people are involved in travel and tourism (Cimacio et al., 2009). Nowadays, many people across the world participate in leisure activities and tourism for a variety of reasons. They try to make savings and draw up plans as to where they want to spend their holidays. Page (2007) reveals that there are intrinsic and extrinsic factors that drive people to choose travel destinations. Intrinsic factors include; self-realization and boosting one's ego whereas extrinsic factors are those that shape individuals' attitudes, preferences and perceptions from the external environment. Cimacio et al. (2009) add that people travel from one place to another for physical and health-related, enjoyment including educational and recreation reasons.

Some people travel to places to learn about new cultures and places and hence achieve self-fulfillment as travelling contributes to personal development and elevation of social status. The rise in the need for travel in the tourism industry has increased the demand for intermediaries to link up travelers with what they want to consume as they travel. Travel agents and individuals involved in travel

intermediation create courtesy statements which also play a role in motivating a person's decision making to travel to a place some day: An example of such a statement is: *A well-travelled person has a wider outlook on life; more often than not they are also looked up to by others. Travel, after all is considered a natural teacher and a bridge to understanding people* (Cimacio et al., 2009, p. 30).

Travel therefore, creates a demand for people to make interesting and informative commentaries, as a result tour guides come to play a role for them. Travel becomes more enjoyable when a well-trained guide is present. Tour guides need to be knowledgeable like teachers so they can impart knowledge and give travellers interesting correct information about the destination they are visiting and what they are seeing. This process satisfies travellers and eventually induces more growth in tourism as a whole, especially return and repeat visits (Mancini, 2001).

Indonesia harbors great attractions for tourists, because it has much beautiful scenery, many interesting cultures, many historical remains, hundreds of great beaches, and much more. For example, Banda Aceh or Kutaraja is one of a few old cities in the archipelago as it is more than 810 years old and has lots of history (Martunis, October 7, 2015). For example, in 1873, the Dutch tried to take Kutaraja with 3.000 men, but were thrown back into the sea. Later with 10.000 men, the biggest Dutch army ever in Indonesia, they managed to take Kutaraja city but could not conquer the inland jungle covered areas so they waged an active war until 1907. After that a guerilla war continued until the Japanese arrived in 1943 during the Second World War. At first the Japanese were welcomed because they had defeated the Dutch and because they said they came to bring co-prosperity but after the Japanese started to treat the Acehnese as unpaid slaves the guerilla war started up again only this time against the Japanese. After the Japanese surrender in August, 1945, the Acehnese supported the Indonesian Declaration of Independence. Then after the Dutch with British support re-invaded Indonesia, Aceh remained free from the yoke of the colonialists and continued providing massive support for the civil war against the Dutch including buying the first DC3 plane for the Indonesian airforce which is now on display in the park opposite the museum. At this time Soekarno, the first President of Indonesia promised the Acehnese autonomy after the war. Eventually Indonesia won it's full Indepence, but only a few years later the Indonesian government reneged on it's promise of autonamy so a new civil war

started, this time between the Government of Indonesia and the Aceh Freedom Movement (GAM). This went on for many years until Aceh was hit by the Tsunami in December 2004 when a truce was called. And eventually a peace agreement was reached in Helsinki, Finland on 15th August 2015. Not many people around the world knew about Aceh or Banda Aceh until December 26, 2004, but, today news about Aceh makes the headlines. The Tsunami, this tragic natural disaster killed a total of around 200.000 including around 75.000 or a quarter of Banda Aceh's population at the time and it destroyed almost 60% of the town yet it was the first recorded Tsunami to finish a civil war.

This turbulent history has left many objects of interest. For example the Aceh Tsunami Museum which was built as a memorial to the Tsunami that hit Banda Aceh on December 26, 2004. Hopefully, the Aceh Tsunami Museum will develop to become a place that attracts many foreign tourist visitors to travel to visit this memorial building. In this case, it is important to know that the Tsunami was not only a disaster but also a blessing in disguise because following after it came certain advantages for the people of Aceh, with the arrival of foreign donors from many countries that increased the local economy, in which some of the Acehnese learnt to speak English, as they used it to work with donors to rebuild Aceh also as a direct result of the Tsunami there was a cease fire in the civil war in Aceh which was followed by negotiations which ended in the peace agreement, seven and a half months later, on the 15th of August in Helsinki, Finland. Based on the above, Aceh, especially Banda Aceh, has become a tourist destination that intrigues many international travellers.

The Local Tourist Guides

Nowadays, the target groups for ecotourism do not have to be domestic tourists. Foreign ecotourists coming to this region will increase the sustainability of the region's economy and will help to support its competitiveness. As the local communities have expanded their offerings of tourism services such as home-stays, cultural performances, natural phenomenon and organic home-made products for daily usage, ecotourism performs a valuable role of encouraging further sustainable community and regional development.

The role of English language is very helpful aid to increase and support the ability of the community to promote their unique technologies, ideas and philosophies. Therefore it is quite important to

improve the language skills of the local guides whose work is important for the community.

Sometimes local guides provide guests with village tours, including plantation and trekking tours. They help with local product demonstrations, explain and interpret forest and marine environments and give information about local agriculture and local crafts. Since ecotourists and other visitors coming to traditional villages may not be aware of dangers and threats that are there, the guides are there for their safety as well as to pre-empt any environmental impact. Moreover, the improvement of the guides' English knowledge broadens their horizons and gives them more power to help their communities cope with the inflow of tourists.

Considering the importance of guides and the important role they play in tourism, Zhang and Chow (2004) point out that the success of the tourism industry most of the times relies on the performance of guides, because guides provide the information required by visitors. Guides are also known to have the power to make the visitors visit more enjoyable or more boring. It is further argued that when guides are able to provide quality services to visiting guests, the image and reputation of the destination improves. Not surprisingly, tourist experience can be shaped by the way in which guides execute their functions. Obviously, what guides can do or not do can make or break the visitors' satisfaction (Yu et al., 2004).

According to Mancini (2001), a guide is someone who takes people on sightseeing excursions of limited duration. Whereas Collins (2000, p. 22) has defined a guide as a person who shows other people the way; who leads others on a journey; and one who directs or serves as a model for others in his conduct or career. From a related perspective, a guide is someone who leads groups of visitors in a town or a museum giving information about the displays, the culture, the history or anything other information of interest. The guide gives accurate and correct information on the facilities, activities and history of the place (Cruz, 1999). These definitions point out that a guide is responsible for directing and leading tourists on tours and sightseeing trips and for ensuring their safety.

The World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations (2005) defines a guide as a person who guides visitors in the language of their choice and interprets the cultural and natural heritage of an area where that person normally possesses an area-specific qualification usually issued and or recognized by the appropriate authority. Pond (1993),

therefore adds that a skillful guide is one of the most valuable assets a tourism company can have because in many ways, guides are in the forefront of a tourism business, company or agency since they are the ones who interact with the visitors as much and as often as possible. While there are many definitions of a guide, an internationally accepted definition is given by the International Association of Tour Managers and the European Federation of Tourist Guide Association (EFTGA, 1998) who define a tour guide as a person; “Who guides groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the home country around the monuments, sites and museums of a city or region; to interpret in an inspiring and entertaining manner, in the language of the visitor’s choice, including information about the cultural and natural heritage and environment (Ap & Wong, 2001, p. 551).

In this regard, it describes the job of the tour guides as leading, interpreting, inspiring and entertaining in an unambiguous geographical or environmental setting in which their specialized knowledge of various languages is applied and therefore this definition is the one this research follows. However, other definitions put their central focus on the importance of the personality and the conduct of the guide as an essential ingredient that constitutes the work of the guiding process. For example, as outlined by the Professional Tour Guide Association of San Antonio, a guide is defined as a person who possesses a good blend of enthusiasm and knowledge with a good personality and a high standard of personal conduct and ethics that helps them lead groups of people or individuals to interesting and important sites or displays, while providing interpretation and commentary. Ap and Wong (2000) further say that the guide provides an important part of the interface between the host destination and the visitors since they are front-line employees who are very much responsible for the overall impression and satisfaction of the tourists with the tour services offered by a destination.

In this case, the local guides at the ATM need practical guidance which involves English language skills in order to facilitate their professional work with confidence. Each skill of English which may be required has a different value in terms of its use in the specific field of tourism in order to enable the guides to function more effectively (Ekici, 2003).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research focused on the speaking proficiency in EFL of the local guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum. In this study, the writer used a qualitative descriptive method to find out the EFL language proficiency of the local guides and the difficulties that they faced in communicating with overseas tourists in English. According to Best and Kahn (1993, p. 290) qualitative methods, as the name indicates, are methods that do not involve measurement and statistics. In short, this means that, qualitative research is a way of collecting data which is concerned with describing meaning, rather than with drawing statistical inferences.

In order to collect the data, the writer used a test as the instrument. The kind of test used was an interview: asking each guide their opinion about the philosophy of the Aceh Tsunami Museum and asking for information about the collections in the museum, in which the writer served as the active interviewer in collecting this data. The instrument used to help collect the data was an interview guide. All the data were collected in the natural setting of speaking interaction in interviews and they were also recorded. Thus the researcher did not manipulate any variables to get the data and did not give any treatment to any variables. As stated by Batdulam (2012) in the PET journal, an interview is one method of testing which can be used to evaluate speaking skills. This was also supported by a previous study on a survey of the relationship between English language proficiency and the academic achievements of Iranian EFL students by Maleki and Zangani (2007) who wrote: “to test the speaking ability of the subjects, we also arranged an interview. The grading criteria for assessing the interviews were pronunciation, style, vocabulary, grammar, suitability, fluency, and accuracy, to all of which equal points were assigned”.

Population and Samples

This research was conducted at the ATM (Aceh Tsunami Museum) which is located at Jalan Sultan Iskandar Muda No. 3, Banda Aceh. The present number of staff is 46, that consists of 14 guides, 7 administrative staff, 5 engineers, 10 cleaners and 10 security officers. In this research, the writer only focused on the 14 guides as the research respondents. The writer choose only the guides as respondents

because they are the people who give explanations to visitors and promote the tourism of the Aceh Tsunami Museum and also of Aceh.

The Research Instrument

In order to collect the data, the writer used a test as the instrument. The kind of test was an interview: asking each guide individually their opinion about the philosophy of the Aceh Tsunami Museum and asking for information about the collections in the museum, in which the writer served as the active interviewer in collecting the data. This interview aimed at gathering the data and information needed from the guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum on their English language proficiency in speaking aspects and the difficulties faced by them in communicating with tourists. In addition, the writer used an interview guide as an instrument. Audio recording were done to record each interview as the data was gathered.

Data Collection Procedure

Interviews were used as the major technique to get the data needed for this research. They were conducted to gain information about the English speaking competence of the local guides for promoting tourism at the ATM. The writer interviewed the guides at the ATM when they were off duty. The writer chose the guides as the respondents for this research because they play an important role in giving explanations and promoting tourism at the ATM. In order to avoid data loss, the interviews were sound recorded.

Several questions were asked based on the interview guide. The interviews were done individually, face to face between the writer and each respondent. The interviews in this research were informal so it is expected that they were answered honestly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

As local guides in a tourist attraction, they should be able to speak English well in promoting tourism at the ATM. Some of the guides had good ability and performance in speaking English, because they had a background in teaching English. But the others performed poorly and had poor EFL speaking ability. From the interviews, the writer found that 1 of the 13 respondents had major problems in grammar, 3 respondents were able to use the language accurately and their errors in grammar were quite rare. While 8 others were good in control of grammar and able to speak

EFL with good structural accuracy while only one guide could really demonstrate her mastery of EFL grammar.

Two guides had only barely effective choice of words. 7 from the 13 were only able to speak the language with sufficient vocabulary. 3 of them could understand and participate in many conversations, while only 1 was able to speak English with excellent vocabulary.

Only 2 of the 13 guides could speak equivalent to a native speaker. 3 of them could understand any conversation. 7 others could compete at a normal rate of speech in comprehension and 1 had disconnected ideas and he could not answer the writer's questions.

Based on their fluency, only 2 respondents were completely fluent in EFL such that their speech was fully acceptable by native speakers. 3 of them are able to use language fluently on all levels normally pertinent to professional needs. They can participate in any conversation within the range of their experience with a high degree of fluency. 5 others could discuss particular issues of interest with reasonable ease. While 3 others could handle with confidence but not with facility most social situations, including introductions and casual conversations about current events, as well as work, family, and autobiographical information.

While based on their pronunciation, only 2 of the guides could pronounce English words like a native speaker, 5 made few in pronunciation, 3 made some pronunciation errors but could still be understood and the 3 others made frequent pronunciation errors and sometimes spoke unintelligible.

Hence, only 1 guide was excellent in all aspects (excellent in grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation). While overall the others fell into the categories of very good, good, and enough.

Mostly, the difficulties in English language proficiency in speaking aspect that faced by the guides of ATMceh Tsunami Museum were in expressing ideas verbally, so the guides were not able to give good explanations about the displays in the museum to tourists visiting from overseas. Their, poor vocabulary also made it difficult for them to express their ideas. Lack of knowledge about grammar and collocations also made it difficult for them to speak with correct grammar. Poor pronunciation made it hard for them to pronounce words correctly. Not being confident to speak was also a very big problem for them which made it difficult for them to speak English.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

Conclusions

After collecting and processing all the data from the interviews with each guide, it can be concluded that the guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum faced many problems in speaking English. Even though the quantity of errors made varied amongst the guides, nevertheless they always occurred when the guides were speaking English. Additionally, frequent errors occurred in all categories. From all 13 guides, only one was in the category of excellent in all aspects (excellent in grammar, vocabulary, comprehension, fluency, and pronunciation), while the others fell into the categories of very good, good, and just enough.

Most of them found that it was very difficult for them to talk about situations in the past since actually, when speaking English, they, almost all, always used the simple present tense. They got confused – thus for example, they would use the tense marker for simple present for the simple past, and at another time one used the simple past tense format for the simple present. These misuses occurred frequently and were usually found in the use of the auxiliaries and the changing verbs. And sometimes, they used ‘a’ with a plural noun and then they used ‘have’ with a singular noun and so on and so on.

Additionally, most errors occurred not only in grammar such as in tenses, verb forms, and subject-verb agreement, but also in their choices of vocabulary and collocations. Most of them made frequent errors in word choice, they also frequently repeated words in the same sentence, and sometimes their ideas were disconnected. Most of the guides at the ATM understood what we were talking about, they understand what we were asking them, but they actually found it very difficult to give good, easily understandable feedback. These problems occurred because they did not have enough vocabulary or enough practice so they were not confident when speaking English, as it was difficult for them to express their ideas in EFL. In other aspects, most of them had difficulties in pronouncing English words, few of them could pronounce simple words like ‘*high*, *wave*, *young*, and *retreat*’ correctly.

Suggestions

Based on the findings and discussions in this study, some suggestions follow regarding some future teaching-learning programs.

a. For the Guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum

They should be given a teaching-learning program to master the rules of grammar that they need, particularly for some tenses which are mostly used in daily guiding activities such as the simple present and the simple past tense. To make the program successful they should:

- (1)Join an established English training course,
- (2)Practice speaking English with confidence every day, every time and everywhere,
- (3)Listen to a lot of English in the form of television shows, movies, radio and especially on the internet,(4) Read English every day, eg. Read *The Jakarta Post*, especially reading aloud in a group.

b. For the Head of the Aceh Tsunami Museum

Some suggestions for the Head of the ATMuseum are as follows:

- (1) Run an English training course. By attending an EFL training course the guides at the Aceh Tsunami Museum, who do not have an English educational background, can learn to speak English properly. An English language course is required at the museum, so that the guides can communicate well with visitors from overseas and promote tourism at the ATM..
- (2) Have a regular weekly English club meeting modelled on the Toastmasters International system , so that the guides and other staff can learn-by-doing, having fun practicing speaking English regularly together.

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